

Remarks

This application is a continuation application of and claim priority from U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/395,311, filed on September 13, 1999.

Applicants hereby add new claims 21-33. Accordingly, claims 1-33 are pending in the present application. Support for the new claims may be found at least at specification pages 9-12 and Figs. 5-7 of the originally filed application.

Claims 1-27 correspond to claims 1-27 of the parent application and were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness over U.S. Patent No. 5,400,243 to Oheda et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,559,971 to Watts et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and urge allowance of the present application.

With respect to the obviousness rejection of claims 1-27, the claims were rejected over Oheda in view of Watts. Watts is assigned to the assignee of the present application.

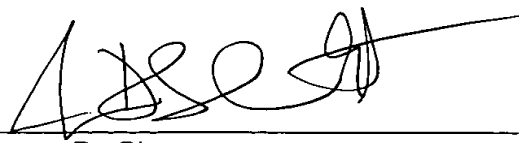
The present application and the Watts patent were, at the time the invention of this application was made, owned by the assignee hereof. Further, the Watts patent qualifies as prior art under 102(e). In view of this continuation filing, 103(c) applies and the Watts reference does not qualify as prior art pursuant to 103(c) and as set forth in MPEP 706.02(I)(3) (8th ed. Rev. 1). Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of the claims 1-27 and allowance of all claims in the next action.

Applicant respectfully requests allowance of all pending claims.

The Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned if the Examiner believes such would facilitate prosecution of the present application. The undersigned is available for telephone consultation at any time during normal business hours (Pacific Time Zone).

Respectfully submitted,  
Brian Peavey et al.

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